

Appl. No. 09/724,845
Amdt. dated September 9, 2003
Reply to Office Action of June 9, 2003

PATENT

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 11-22 are pending.

Claims 11-22 stand rejected under 35 USC §112, first paragraph. The Examiner states that the specification does not provide support for "fiber strands," only "fiber cords." Accordingly, applicants have amended the claims so that they now refer to fiber cords rather than fiber strands. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that the rejection be withdrawn.

Additionally, applicants have amended claim 11 to make it clear that the fiber cords may be bundle-like or band-like. Support for this may be found at least at page 4, line 6 of the specification.

Claims 11-18 stand rejected under 35 USC §102(b) as being anticipated by Murphy et al. (U.S. Patent No. 4,407,885). This rejection is respectfully traversed and reconsideration is respectfully requested.

In his response to applicants' arguments, the Examiner indicated that applicants do not claim the thermoplastic material as particles. Accordingly, applicants have amended claim 11 to make it clear that the fibers of the first array are impregnated with more thermoplastic particles than the fibers of a second array. It is respectfully submitted that the present invention discloses a composite material with fibers and plastic impregnation that is not anticipated by any of the cited references nor is rendered obvious by their combination. It is respectfully submitted that Murphy discloses an assembly including thermoplastic fibrous material (not particles) intermixed with reinforcing fibrous material. It is respectfully submitted that this is not an article of areally extended fiber and plastic composite material including impregnations as clearly recited in the claims.

Finally, it is respectfully submitted that neither Murphy nor any of the other cited references disclose that the composite material is stiff in a direction of the fibers of a first array of fibers and is flexible transversely to that same direction.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that none of the references, either alone or in combination, teach, disclose or suggest an areally extended material as recited in the claims. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that claims 11-22 are allowable.

Appl. No. 09/724,845
Amdt. dated September 9, 2003
Reply to Office Action of June 9, 2003

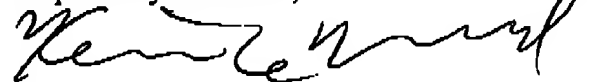
PATENT

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicants believe all claims now pending in this Application are in condition for allowance. The issuance of a formal Notice of Allowance at an early date is respectfully requested.

If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this application, please telephone the undersigned at 415-576-0200.

Respectfully submitted,



Kevin T. LeMond
Reg. No. 35,933

TOWNSEND and TOWNSEND and CREW LLP
Two Embarcadero Center, 8th Floor
San Francisco, California 94111-3834
Tel: 415-576-0200
Fax: 415-576-0300
Attachments
KTL:lo
60035812 v1

OFFICIAL

RECEIVED
CENTRAL FAX CENTER

SEP 10 2003